



# Special Edition: The MCDHH Staff

## Executive Director



**Ernest Garrett III**

Ernest E. Garrett III is the Executive Director of the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. A native of St. Louis, MO, he is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), certified advanced social work case manager (C-ASWCM), certified school social work specialist (C-SSWS), certified advanced children, youth, and family social worker (C-ACYFSW), and a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW). Ernest received an Associate of Arts degree (general studies) and dual Bachelor of Arts degrees (professional/technical writing and history) from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He went on to earn an advanced academic degree in administration (M.S.) and an advanced professional degree in social work (M.S.W.) with a school social work specialization, both from Gallaudet University. He is currently pursuing a research doctorate degree (Ph.D.) in management from Walden University Online, with a specialization in leadership and organizational change.

Mr. Garrett is a member of the following statewide boards and committees by virtue of his office as MCDHH Executive Director:

- *Missouri Board for Certification of Interpreters;*
- *Missouri Access and Functional Needs Committee;*
- *Missouri Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Project Advisory Committee;*
- *Missouri Department of Mental Health Deaf Advisory Council;*
- *Relay Missouri Advisory Committee; and*
- *Missouri Newborn Hearing Screening Standing Committee.*

Last but not least, Mr. Garrett is the immediate past president and chairman of the board of the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), Inc.; Co-Director of NBDA's Archives & History Program; Advisory Board Member to the National Association of the Deaf, Inc. - Described and Captioned Media Program; and Board Member at Large with the National Association of State Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.



## **Executive Secretary**



**Mary Sheridan**

Mary Sheridan is the Executive Secretary of the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Mary graduated from North Callaway High School. Shortly after graduation she became employed at The Callaway Bank. In 1984 she began her career with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as a secretary with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. After 16 years with Vocational Rehabilitation she accepted the position of Executive Secretary with The Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing where she has remained for 13 years.

## **MICS Coordinator**



**Peggy Withrow**

Peggy Withrow is the MICS Coordinator for the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Peggy graduated from William Woods University in 1998 with her B.S. degree in ASL/English Interpretation and received her MICS Comprehensive Certification in 2002. She has been an interpreter with Columbia Interpreting Services since 1999 where she worked in a variety of settings including post-secondary, medical, legal, mental health, and vocational rehabilitation. For the past five years, she has also worked as a video relay interpreter for Sorenson Communications. In 2007 she became an evaluator for the Missouri Interpreter Certification System. An Associate Member of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), she chairs the bylaws committee for the Missouri Chapter of RID (MO-RID).



## **Community Support Liaison**



**Christopher Ludvigsen**

Christopher Ludvigsen is the Community Support Liaison for Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of hearing. He is a native of St. Louis, Missouri and a graduate of Brentwood High School. He is an alumnus of Gallaudet University located in Washington, D.C., where he received his B.S. in Business Administration in 2008. He was President of the Greater St. Louis Chapter (GSLC) under Missouri Association of the Deaf (MoAD) before coming into this position. Chris is currently studying for his M.A. in Management & Leadership from Webster University. He went to Australia during his sophomore year of High School and would like to go back to visit again one day.

## **Staff Interpreter**



**Crystal Anderson**

Crystal Anderson holds MICS Comprehensive certification and CI/CT certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. She graduated from William Woods University with a Bachelors of Arts in Sign Language Interpretation in 2001. After becoming certified and licensed she began working as a freelance interpreter in the mid-Missouri area. Crystal has also worked as a staff interpreter for an interpreting agency, interpreted in a Missouri school district, as well as managed a call center for Sorenson Communications. She has interpreted in many settings such as educational, VRS, VRI, medical and platform. Crystal brings both knowledge and experience to the job, having served as a member of the Missouri Interpreter Conference Planning Committee and as an evaluator for the Missouri Interpreter Certification System for a number of years.



## **Interpreting Intern**



**Kyla Mortenson**

Kyla Mortenson is a senior in the Interpreter Training Program at William Woods University and is completing her internship with MCDHH. She will be graduating in May 2014 with a B.A. in American Sign Language Studies and Interpreting. Kyla is from Springfield, Missouri and was introduced to the Deaf community at a young age. Her parents are both ASL interpreters from Springfield, where they also pastor Ozark Mountain Deaf Church. Kyla grew up in the Deaf church and always enjoyed learning the language and culture, so it did not take her long to realize that she wanted to become an interpreter as well. Kyla is married and currently living in Jefferson City, MO, where she and her husband are youth pastors at a church in town.